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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Constitution Deadlocked over Federalism Debate in Iraq - Sabah
Iraqi Constitution at Impasse - Milliyet
Women's Organizations Fear a Setback of Rights in Iraq - Hurriyet
Jewish 'Intifada' in Gaza: Settlers Resist Israeli Police - Milliyet
Joy in Palestine, Fury in Gaza over Withdrawal - Aksam
Turkey Lauds Israel, Palestine over Gaza Pullout - Milliyet
Chavez Threatens US with Halting Oil Exports - Aksam
30-Year Civil War Ends in Indonesia - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Bush Letter Calls on Erdogan for Joint Fight Against Terror - Zaman
No Compromise over Iraqi Constitution - Radikal
Iraqi Constitutional Deadline Extended One Month - Zaman
Iraq: Federation or Partition - Yeni Safak
Nicosia Pressures EU to Get Access to Turkish Ports - Zaman
Israel Pulling Out of Gaza - Cumhuriyet
End of Gaza Occupation - Yeni Safak
Abbas: West Bank Pullout Next - Cumhuriyet
Radical Jews Lock Doors, Resist Pullout - Zaman
Reluctant Evacuation of Gaza - Radikal
Another Turkish Truck Driver Killed in Iraq - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Turkey Welcomes Gaza Pullout Process: The Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) welcomed on Monday Israel's determination to implement its plan to pullout of the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian government's 'constructive attitude.' 'Israel has initiated its unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and partial withdrawal from West Bank, as of today. We expect the withdrawal to create a peace dynamic that could prompt the parties to resume talks aimed at finding a solution on the basis of the road map,' MFA said in a statement, adding that Turkey was ready to provide the parties with the necessary support following the pullout. MFA voiced concern that radical circles opposed to the vision of a two-state solution could shift to violence once again to block the pullout process, and called for common sense on both sides. 'The international community should take all measures to improve the living standards of Palestinian people and rebuild Palestinian housings, including those in the Gaza Strip, as soon as possible. Israel should facilitate this process and Palestine should maintain security in the region,' MFA said. It added that Turkey has been supporting efforts to rebuild Palestine after the pullout is completed under the leadership of James Wolfensohn. The Turkish private sector has been supporting those efforts by creating new opportunities of cooperation under the Ankara Forum established by the Union of Turkish Chambers (TOBB), MFA noted, adding that the government of Turkey will encourage the Turkish private sector to develop economic ties with Palestine.

US to Invite 'TRNC' Leader Talat to Washington: Washington has responded positively to a request from Prime Minister Erdogan that the Turkish Cypriot leader Talat be invited to the United States, "Yeni Safak" reports. Erdogan told the US Embassy Ankara Charge d'Affaires Nancy McEldowney at a meeting last week that such an invitation would be important in making the Greek Cypriots 'pull themselves together' and adopt a compromising attitude. The paper expects the US to invite Talat to Washington before the end of this year. Erdogan also reiterated to the Charge Turkey's request that a US plane be flown directly to north Cyprus. McEldowney did not respond to the request, but said that the US has given USD 30 million to support the economy of Turkish

Cyprus, and that it will grant more US loans and scholarships for Turkish Cypriot students, says "Yeni Safak."

Iran's New FM Declared Persona Non Grata in 1989: Manuchehr Mottaki, the new Iranian foreign minister-designate, had to leave his position as ambassador to Ankara after being declared 'persona non grata' in 1989, papers report. Mottaki's term of office between 1986-1989 was a period in which Iran continued efforts to export its Islamic revolution. Some of Mottaki's statements during that period have strained tensions between Ankara and Tehran. Mottaki was also accused of providing support to 'backwards' groups in Turkey. But the Turgut Ozal government at the time did not declare Mottaki 'persona non grata' so as not to damage further the ties between the two countries. Shortly before Mottaki's term in Turkey was due to end, Ankara recalled its Tehran Ambassador, Omer Akbel, in protest, and Mottaki was recalled by Iran in response. On Tuesday, the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) denied press reports that Mottaki was declared persona non grata during his term in Ankara. MFA officials told the semi-official "Anadolu Ajansi" that despite the problems experienced at that time, Mottaki was not declared persona non grata. The Ozal government during Mottaki's term in Ankara had strongly reacted to the Iranian ambassador's participation in a Welfare Party (RP) supported 'solidarity meeting' with the Palestinian people organized in Konya. Tehran, in turn, criticized the ban on Islamic headgear in Turkish universities. Turkey had recalled its ambassador in Tehran, which prompted Iran to withdraw Mottaki from Turkey, MFA officials said.

TGS Drafts Report Regarding Southeast Turkey: The Turkish General Staff (TGS) is to submit problems in southeast Turkey for discussion at the National Security Council (NSC) meeting on August 23 in a report which says that terror was an issue in Turkey, but that the country did not have a Kurdish problem, "Hurriyet" reports. The paper regards the TGS report as being drafted to be a response to Prime Minister Erdogan who had acknowledged the existence of a 'Kurdish problem' during a visit to Diyarbakir last Friday. Military officials told the paper that the main problem in southeast Turkey was underdevelopment. Officials warned against linking the PKK to a certain ethnic group, attempts which may encourage other ethnic groups to form organizations in the style of the terrorist Kurdish grouping. They also stressed that the military was not pressing to restore the emergency rule in the region. Military officials also noted that new changes were needed in the penal code and the law for combating terrorism, says "Hurriyet."

PKK Defector Details Police on Camps in Northern Iraq: A PKK defector, Ibrahim Vural told the police that the terror organization aimed at 'crushing' Turkey's economy via attacks against economic and tourist targets in an effort to force Ankara to hold negotiations with them, "Milliyet" reports. Vural turned himself in to police in Istanbul in early June. Vural said that the PKK had 3 tons of C-4 explosives, 21 IGLA-1 missiles, anti-aircraft batteries and large amounts of ammunition at the Zap camp on Turkey's border with Iraq. He claimed that the missiles arrived in the Zap camp through Iran and the Kandil region from Armenia. Several 12-strong PKK teams have infiltrated into Turkey to attack targets in major Turkish cities, he said.

MI5 Warns Turkish Intelligence of Plot Against Minister Aksu: The British secret service MI5 warned the Turkish intelligence service MIT that a bomb would be planted in a plane carrying interior minister Abdulkadir Aksu to Turkey from a meeting of the interior ministers of Iraq's neighbors in Riyadh last month, "Aksam" reports. The Saudi police examined thoroughly all luggage aboard and searched passengers boarding the plane, but no explosives were found. On Monday, Aksu confirmed the report and said that the MI5 warning had been a good example of cooperation and information sharing among intelligence organizations against global terror.

Fractions in AKP Uneasy with Erdogan Referral to Kurdish Problem: Nationalist and Islamist wings in the ruling AK Party are uneasy with Prime Minister Erdogan's acknowledgment of a 'Kurdish problem' in Turkey during a visit to the mainly Kurdish city of Diyarbakir last Friday, saying that other ethnic groups may demand a similar approach to their problems which could undermine Turkey's unity, papers report. The main opposition CHP lashed out at the intellectuals who held a meeting with Erdogan last week for being 'manipulated' to set the grounds for a favorable atmosphere before the PM's call on Diyarbakir. However, CHP lawmakers from the southeast supported Erdogan. Erdogan responded to criticism that he was in contact with the PKK by saying that this is political rudeness: 'I did not talk with the PKK, and I would not do so,' Erdogan said. The PM noted that the term 'Kurdish problem' was used by other politicians such as Ozal, Demirel and Erbakan as well as CHP

leader Baykal.

`TRNC' Flags at Half-Mast over Victims of Greek Plane Crash: Flags will fly at half-mast in Turkish Cyprus on Wednesday for the victims who lost their lives aboard a Greek Cypriot jetliner which crashed near Athens over the weekend, papers report. The crash killed all 121 passengers on board.

Morgan Stanley Sees Positive Indications in Turkish Economy: The leading global investment bank Morgan-Stanley said in a report Monday that far-reaching structural reforms had better integrated Turkey with the global economy, papers cite in a report by the semi-official "Anatolian Agency." Morgan-Stanley predicts the year-end inflation rate will be 6.2 percent, remaining below the Turkish Central Bank's target of 8 percent this year. `As the Turkish economy approaches the final stage of macroeconomic normalization, policy coordination becomes more important,' the Morgan-Stanley report said, adding that deregulating product and labor markets are vital to overcoming `tacky' inflation rates in certain sectors of the economy.

Another Turkish Truck Driver Killed in Iraq: A Turkish truck driver was killed 40 km north of Baghdad yesterday when he hit a dead cow put on a motorway by insurgents, a spokesman for the Iraqi military said. The identity of the driver was not immediately available.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq; Israel/Gazza Withdrawal

"Iraq and Religious Fundamentalism"

Erdal Safak commented in the mass appeal "Sabah" (8/16): "It seems that Bush and Blair's pledge about freedom and equality for Iraq will remain as rhetoric, particularly for the country's women. The 50-year history of a secular Iraq is about to be replaced by a religious fundamentalist structure. Northern Iraq is the only region that can save itself from this fate. . Unless the US intervenes at the very last minute, the Iraqi constitution draft denies the rights of women and treats them as second class citizens. . In fact fundamentalist practices against women have already started in both Shiite and Sunni areas even before the constitution is approved. . It is worth asking the question: Do we prefer northern Iraq to be an integral part of a fundamentalist state, or do we prefer an autonomous but secular northern Iraq?"

"August 15 for Iraq"

Cengiz Candar observed in the conservative-sensational "Dunden Bugune Tercuman" (8/16): "History tells us that efforts launched with good intentions do not necessarily bring positive results in the end. Those who have the power of facilitating a historical process do not always have the capability to control the results. . When Americans toppled the cruel regime of Saddam Hussein and started the process of democratization in Iraq, none of them could foresee the point that has been reached today. As a result of the ongoing democratic process initiated by the US, Iraq is turning into another version of the Islamic Republic of Iran. A Shiiteland has emerged in the south, a Kurdistan in the north, and Iraq's Sunni-controlled central region has turned into a source of violence and terror. This was not the idea the US had in mind when it started this process. But it is the reality in Iraq, at least for the foreseeable future."

"Pandora's Box Has Been Opened"

Hakan Deniz commented in the economic-political "Referans" (8/16): "The operation in Iraq has opened Pandora's box and ruined the balances that had held for 70 years. The Kurds and Shiites are seeking a federation in the short run, and aiming independence in the longer term. These two ethnic groups are demanding a share of revenues from oil resources located in their territory. The Sunnis are disappointed by what they view as a betrayal by western countries. One would have to be very optimistic to expect that the sides will be able to reach a workable agreement. On the contrary, there are strong signs that there will be a period of clashes between Iraqi groups. This is of direct concern for Turkey. While making its economic and political plans, Ankara should consider that a new era, and one that could be very bloody, has started in the Middle East. Who is going to benefit from all this chaos? Putting aside the insurgency and the military casualties, the US operation in Iraq has been very successful. The US is no longer facing a regime that withholds its oil from the US market. Instead, it faces three Muslim ethnic groups fighting with each other over control of the country's natural resources."

"First Gaza, and Then?"

Sami Kohen wrote in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (8/16): "The Israeli withdrawal plan from Gaza is being implemented by PM Sharon in a surprisingly timely fashion. The impact of Israeli public opinion is undeniable on the implementation of this decision. It is equally true that the armed struggle

in Gaza led by Hamas was a significant factor. Other international factors, particularly the US effort, should also be mentioned. Given the current situation, further steps in the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue and a reexamination of the Middle East road map can only take place through the push of internal and external dynamics. Vision and courage are needed on both sides to make that happen. Sharon must not block progress toward a Palestinian state, and Palestinians must follow through on expectations that they will stop the violence and seek a consensus. Gaza has brought a chance for peace. Let us hope that further steps will follow."

MCELDOWNEY